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'Young Brigade', and by the predominance of the 'social' over the 'political' and even over the 'national'.

This revolution was in the logic of events; was there any need to invoke the ascendancy or the presence of Russia to explain it? On emerging from an upheaval unprecedented in their history, the little nations, stupefied by the blow and completely helpless, saw their recent past only as error or treason.

We cannot even reproach Russia with having bound up her action with a policy of patronage or aimed at an ideological synchronisation of the régimes born on the territories she had liberated. In Hungary, for example, she was very careful not to recreate the atmosphere of the time of Bela Kun, whose sinister memory, she found, was still alive.

But, in the Slavonic countries, the parties of the extreme Left, almost everywhere identified with the Resistance, took advantage of the presence and the prestige of Russia in order to get into power and stay there. This led to a misunderstanding which, by associating the Russian authorities with the Governments which they were believed to favour, risked one day exposing the popularity of the Soviet Union in these countries to a turn in the tide of internal politics.

Obliged henceforth to gravitate in the orbit of the powerful Russian State, the Slavonic nations could not consider the future from the same angle as they had done in 1918. At the conclusion of a devastating war, Russia would never again allow neighbouring States to serve as a diplomatic or military jumping-off ground for a possible adversary. She regarded them as her security ramp.

One might be tempted to see in this Muscovite hold over Eastern Europe a revolution of an international order. In truth it was a revolution only in relation to an abnormal state of affairs—that of the 1920–1940 period, which rested on Russia's inertia in Europe. It could not reasonably be expected that this state of affairs would last indefinitely. The Europe of 1945 was more logical than that of 1918—at any rate, more in conformity with the classic play of international forces.

The slogan of Slav solidarity, which formed the *leit-motiv* of the Moscow Congresses of 1942–1944, had galvanised and co-ordinated the movements for resistance to the invader. In

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engendered. For the occasion, they forgot the fact that the monarchy had, more than once, had its prerogatives disputed by dictatorships. Only by assassination did Ferdinand get rid of Stamboulov, and Boris of Stamboliiski. And M. Gheorgiev himself had been able to overthrow parliamentary government only because the army had given him a helping hand. The will of the sovereign had entered little into that event.

However that might be, the fate of the monarchy was settled. By doing away with it, the Bulgarian people were convinced that they were clarifying their destiny. The young King Simeon II, then aged 8, was living in Vranja with his mother and his sister, in an isolation which was practically exile, while the royal duties were performed by three regents appointed by the National Front. On September 8, 1946, the Bulgarian nation, by a huge majority (3,800,000 votes to 179,000), voted in favour of the republic, which was proclaimed on the 15th of the same month. The following week Simeon II, under the care of the Queen-Mother, who was dressed in deep mourning, embarked on a Turkish vessel bound for Egypt, where he was to join his maternal grandfather, ex-King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy. One newspaper *Otetchestvene Front* (Homeland Front) published, by way of farewell, an article by General Hristo Stölkov, reproaching the defunct monarchy for having isolated Bulgaria from the other Slavonic peoples. 'It is no accident if, at the time of the first imperialist war, all the Slavs [*sic*] were on the side of the Allies, whilst Bulgaria alone threw in her lot with Germany'.

The convening of the electoral body for October 27[1] gave rise to a diplomatic passage of arms among the Allies. The British Government protested against the obstacles put in the way of the Opposition's campaign, and against the persecution to which the Agrarians were subjected. And Mr. Byrnes asked the Allied Control Commission, sitting in Sofia, to take adequate measures to guarantee the integrity of the poll. Russia's representative on the Commission, General Birousov, opposed the consideration of this request, which he denounced as foreign interference with Bulgarian home affairs.

The elections gave the anticipated results; the Home Front secured 346 seats (of which 277 went to the Communists) as against the Opposition's 101 seats. It would appear that this

1 [1946 - Analyst]